

I. Executive Summary

This draft is an update to the 1998 Regional Transportation Plan (98 RTP). The 1998 RTP conformity status expires on June 9, 2001. The Draft 2001 RTP was prepared in compliance with Federal law and results from more than two years of work that began with the adoption of the 1998 RTP in April 1998. Concurrent with the adoption of the 1998 RTP, the Southern California Association of Governments' (SCAG) Regional Council directed staff to address four issue areas and to develop regional consensus in these areas in the next RTP update. The issues were: growth forecasts, long term transportation financing needs, the future of airports in the region as well as operations and maintenance needs of the existing transportation system. This Executive Summary provides an overview of the process used to develop this Draft 2001 RTP Update, the most significant changes that have occurred in the past three years affecting the RTP and the key recommendations of the Draft 2001 RTP Update.

Overview of Plan Update Process

The RTP presents an assessment of the overall growth and economic trends in the SCAG region for the years 2001-2025 and provides strategic direction for investments during this time period. The RTP is a critical document, which is necessary to assure Federal and State funding. It should serve as a catalyst for linking the various transportation agency investments within the SCAG region to provide a cohesive, balanced and multi-modal transportation system that addresses regional goals and is consistent with federal and state requirements. Given the size and diversity of the SCAG region -- with 16 million people, 184 cities and many transportation agencies -- the development of consensus on future transportation investments among stakeholders is truly a challenge.

To address this challenge and to update the RTP on the schedule required by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), SCAG continued a bottom-up collaborative planning process and initiated twelve task forces and numerous subcommittees. Each task force had a specific mission and addressed issues in as much detail as time allowed, with the goal of making recommendations to SCAG's Transportation and Communications Committee (TCC), which would then provide overall direction to the development of the RTP. Task force membership included hundreds of elected officials, local and regional officials, representatives of county transportation commissions and the subregions, representatives of Federal and State agencies as well as representatives of community groups and environmental organizations. Hundreds of meetings were held over the past two years to focus on specific modes or policies. This process helped build consensus on important issues and provided direction to the staff in preparing this Draft 2001 RTP Update. A listing of the task forces, key subcommittees and their respective missions are presented in [Table 3. 2](#) in Section III of this document. A complete listing of members for each of the task forces is provided in the Appendix.

Changes in the Region since Adoption of the 1998 RTP

While the transportation planning process is continuous and the region is constantly undergoing change, SCAG must develop an updated plan every three years. Key inputs to the plan have changed since the adoption of the 1998 RTP.

There are five principal areas where changes have impacted the development of this Draft 2001 RTP Update:

- ✓ Growth Forecasts
- ✓ Financial Assumptions
- ✓ Regional Aviation System
- ✓ Transit Services
- ✓ Transportation and Air Quality Conformity

In addition, an increased focus on environmental justice by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has required special efforts by SCAG to consider the needs of those persons traditionally underserved by the transportation system. Each of these areas is discussed briefly below and in greater detail in various sections of this document.

✓ Growth Forecasts

The growth forecasts that were made in 1998 were overstated for 2020, which was the final year of that plan. Nevertheless, tremendous growth is forecasted over the next twenty-five years, with an expected increase of almost 7 million people, 3 million jobs and 2.2 million households. [Table 1.1](#) shows the current assumptions for growth in the SCAG region over the life of the Draft 2001 RTP. Growth strategies and policy implications are discussed later in the document.

Table 1.1

Key Growth Assumptions for the Draft 2001 RTP Update (in millions)					
	1997	2010	2020	2025	% Change 1997 to 2025
Population	16.1	19.1	21.3	22.6	40%
Employment	7.0	8.8	9.6	10.0	43%
Households	5.2	6.1	6.9	7.4	42%

✓ Financial Assumptions

In 1998, the Regional Council directed staff to look closely at the long-range financial assumptions for transportation revenues in the SCAG region. This direction led to the creation and mission of the Long Range Transportation Finance Task Force. As a result of careful analyses and deliberation of options, the need to change the financial assumptions for the 2001

RTP Update became evident. The reasons for changes in the financial assumptions fall into three main categories:

- the sunset of local transportation sales taxes in Imperial, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside counties during the time frame of the RTP
- the projected loss of gasoline tax revenues due to the penetration of alternative fueled vehicles over the life of the plan and
- the projected costs of operating and maintaining the existing transportation system in the region.

Additionally, legal mandates such as the Consent Degree in Los Angeles County requires the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA) to purchase additional buses and increase bus transit service. As a consequence of these conditions, the financial forecast for the 2001 RTP has been updated substantially. The updated financial forecast, however, results in a potential revenue shortfall of nearly \$11 billion. In recognizing the need for a regional financial strategy to fund transportation facilities and services required for the region, the Finance Task Force identified \$40.1 billion in additional revenues to offset the region's projected revenue shortfall and provide net funds of \$29.4 billion for new RTP Projects as shown below:

Table 1.2

Regional Checkbook 1998 RTP vs. 2001 RTP <i>Constant 1997 Dollars (in billions)</i>		
	1998 RTP	2001 RTP
Total Revenues	\$ 89.8*	\$ 99.8
Total Baseline Costs	\$ (65.1)	\$ (110.5)
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$ 24.7	\$ (10.7)
Additional Revenues	\$ 0.0	\$ 40.1**
Net Available Revenues for RTP Projects	\$ 24.7	\$ 29.4
Notes: * Includes \$2.8 billion in transit restructuring savings **Includes Alternative Funding Strategy		

The RTP must be fiscally constrained in accordance with Federal regulations, which means that revenues must reasonably be expected to be available over the time frame of the RTP. If revenue shortfalls are anticipated and additional funding is needed, then the financial plan must also identify alternative funding sources and include a strategy for securing the revenue.

The Finance Task Force realized that the SCAG region would have to develop an alternative funding strategy in order to maintain the existing system and go forward with short term committed projects. In developing this strategy, the Finance Task Force considered two primary objectives:

- The strategy should provide sufficient revenue to fund the program of projects in the RTP as well as the deficit in the baseline forecast.

- The strategy should provide sufficient revenue to fund high priority projects that ensure that the region will remain in compliance with air quality mandates, environmental justice requirements and mobility needs.

Additionally, the Finance Task Force recognized the importance of offsetting the eventual decline in gas tax revenues due to the anticipated market penetration of alternative fuel vehicles. In further development of the region's funding strategy, the Finance Task Force addressed this decline in gas tax revenues by evaluating the current tax policies on alternative energy sources.

In August 2000, the TCC endorsed principles governing the funding strategy for the 2001 RTP Update. These principles have guided the development of the following financial assumptions, which were used to formulate SCAG's alternative funding strategy.

- Local transportation sales taxes in Orange, Riverside, Imperial and San Bernardino Counties are extended beyond the next ten years;
- Ventura County is assumed to pass a local sales tax dedicated to transportation in 2005;
- An adjustment is made to the state excise fuel tax rate to increase its purchasing power and to be consistent with historical modifications. The adjustment would occur between 2005 and 2010;
- A gasoline tax equivalency fee is implemented to offset the anticipated loss in gasoline tax revenues due to the penetration of alternative fuel vehicles;
- The state sales tax on gasoline will continue to be dedicated to transportation after 2006.

As a result of these assumptions, the Regional Checkbook for the Draft 2001 RTP Update shows \$29.4 billion in revenues available for new projects. The available revenue is the net amount after subtracting baseline costs. Baseline costs include short-term committed projects, in addition to operations and maintenance expenses of the existing transit and roadway system. Committed projects include those in the 2000-2006 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and projects in the Governors' Traffic Congestion Relief Program (TCRP).

Table 1.3 summarizes the updated Regional Checkbook including the additional revenues as discussed above.

Table 1.3

Regional Checkbook Constant 1997 dollars (in billions)		
Total Baseline Revenue	\$	99.8
New Funding Strategy¹	\$	40.1
Total Revenues	\$	139.9
Total Baseline Costs	\$	(110.5)
<i>RTIP & Other Committed Projects²</i>	\$	<i>(35.5)</i>
<i>Operations & Maintenance</i>	\$	<i>(63.7)</i>
<i>Bonding costs</i>	\$	<i>(11.3)</i>
Net Available Revenues for RTP	\$	29.4

✓ Regional Aviation System

The 1998 RTP Adopted Plan (1998 Medium Scenario) is a placeholder pending review of the RTP Environmental Impact Report and selection of a preferred alternative. In this scenario, all airports are unconstrained and assumed to be able to expand to meet demand. There are no high speed rail linkages between airports and no market incentives for Palmdale or Inland Empire Airports. The regional aviation demand is forecast to be 157 million annual passengers in 2020 and 172 million annual passengers in 2025.

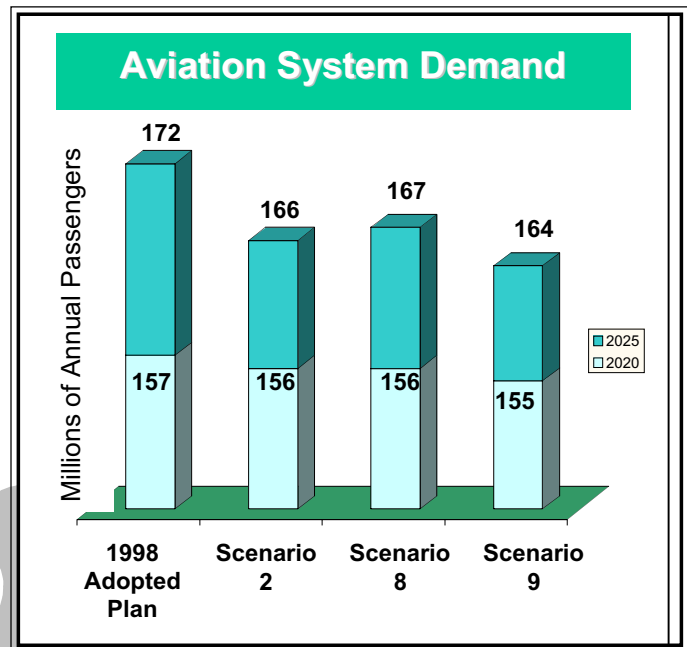
Scenario 2 examines the question, “Can Ontario, El Toro, Palmdale and the emerging Inland Empire airports meet the majority of future air travel demand?” Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is constrained to 70 MAP, while Burbank, John Wayne and Long Beach are all constrained to their physical or legal capacity. High speed rail and market incentives for Palmdale and Inland Empire airports are assumed. Under Scenario 2, regional aviation demand is estimated at 156 MAP in 2020 and 166 MAP in 2025.

Scenario 8 is similar to scenario 2 except that LAX is constrained to its estimated physical capacity of 78 MAP. Regional demand is estimated at 156 MAP in 2020 and 167 MAP in 2025.

Scenario 9 examines the impact of expanding LAX (City of Los Angeles Mayor Riordan’s preferred alternative), with no airport at El Toro. Burbank, John Wayne and Long Beach are all constrained to their physical or legal capacity. High speed rail and market incentives for Palmdale and Inland Empire airports are assumed. Regional aviation demand is estimated at 155 MAP in 2020 and 164 MAP in 2025.

A Regional Aviation Plan, structured as a component of the Regional Transportation Plan, is necessary to coordinate regional airport development with surface transportation development. To implement an adopted Regional Aviation Plan, new institutional arrangements may be needed, such as a regional airport authority. The recently revived Southern California Regional Airport Authority, or a similar entity, could be responsible for overseeing regional airport development as delineated in the Regional Aviation Plan.

Figure 1. 1



✓ Transit Services

The 1998 RTP recommended that \$2.65 billion could be saved over the time frame of the plan through restructuring transit services and the implementation of a vast network of privately funded “Smart Shuttles”--- demand responsive services. Now that a series of Smart Shuttle pilot projects have been implemented, the need to change assumptions regarding the financing and viability of such services is clear. In addition, the savings expected to be identified through the major restructuring of transit services is not likely to materialize and therefore, the Draft 2001 RTP Update does not recommend retaining either of these assumptions. The Transit Corridor Task Force and the Regional Transit Task Force have discussed these issues at length and recommend retaining investments in the 9 major transit corridors identified in the 1998 RTP and extending those investments. In addition, the Task Forces recommended 43 new corridor projects, constrained and long range, which would principally be served with transitways, rapid bus services and urban and commuter rail. The Regional Transit Task Force also analyzed six ridership goal alternatives and recommended the following two alternatives for further consideration by the TCC:

- Maintain 1997 annual per capita ridership of 34.9 trips per person. Maintaining this mode split would result in a 40 percent increase in total transit ridership by 2025.
- Increase annual per capita ridership sufficiently to meet regional air quality conformity requirements. This equates to a 246 percent increase in total transit ridership by 2025 (without other, new non-committed investments), to 72 trips per person annually.

Implementation of either scenario would require new revenue sources and substantial changes in the way transit services are provided. In addition, it is unclear whether major new transit investments at the level, required by the second alternative would, in fact, result in such substantial new ridership increases. The TCC chose to maintain 1997 annual per capita ridership and further study new ways of providing transit to increase the transit mode share.

✓ Transportation and Air Quality Conformity

Under the federal regulations and in the federally designated non-attainment and maintenance areas, the regional transportation plans, programs and projects must comply with the requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) as reflected in the Transportation Conformity Rule.

Emissions attributed to on-road mobile sources can have adverse impacts on health. On-road motor vehicles have become one of the major contributing sources for criteria pollutants. Major criteria pollutants include volatile organic compounds (VOC), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matters in size of 10 microns or less (PM₁₀) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). To reduce the adverse impact of these pollutants on health, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designates the non-attainment areas by pollutant and the CAA sets the specific attainment date by area by pollutant. When a non-attainment area achieves its attainment goal, then EPA will re-designate it as a maintenance area for the next 10-20 years.

The SCAG region has one or more federally designated non-attainment and or maintenance areas, with the exception of the eastern part of Riverside County¹. Thus, the RTP is subject to transportation conformity analyses and determination.

The conformity status of the 1998 RTP expires on June 9, 2001. The 2001 RTP Update and the associated conformity analysis were developed to replace the 1998 RTP.

Since the 1998 RTP, two transportation and air quality related events have had a temporary impact on the transportation planning processes – they adversely impacted the conformity findings of the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB) portion of the 2000/02 – 2005/06 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (2000 RTIP). These two events were:

- Replacement of the two segments of the Metro Redline with the rapid bus projects in Los Angeles County was required. The rail and transit projects are categorically identified as transportation control measure (TCM) projects in the 1997 Ozone State Implementation Plan (SIP) developed for the SCAB.
- The California Air Resources Board (ARB) has recognized the need to remedy the SIP shortfall for those control measures in which the State was responsible for implementation, including the Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) Program. The SCAB portion of the region was more affected by the SIP shortfalls than other federal non-attainment areas in the SCAG region.

These two issues have been resolved and no longer affect the conformity analysis of the 2001 RTP Update.

Since the April 1998 adoption of the 1998 RTP by the Regional Council, the Transportation Conformity Rule was revised by a federal court ruling. The U.S. Court of Appeals March 2, 1999 ruling in *EDF v. EPA* mandated that emissions budgets approved or found adequate by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) can to be used for conformity determination. Under the Transportation Conformity Rule, the Draft 2001 RTP Update must pass the following four tests to continue receiving transportation funds from the federal sources.

- Regional Emission Analysis
- Timely Implementation of Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) Analysis
- Fiscal Constraint Demonstration
- Interagency Consultation and Public Involvement Process

Generally, to meet the first two tests - the Regional Emission Analysis and the Timely Implementation of TCMs Analysis, SCAG must explicitly demonstrate that the regional emissions resulting from implementation of the Draft 2001 RTP policies, programs and projects are consistent with and conform to the applicable State Implementation Plan's (SIP's) goals and objectives for air quality.

¹ Which is a less populated desert area known as Palos Verde Valley.

The Draft 2001 RTP Update is consistent with all federal requirements and conforms to the respective applicable SIPs developed for the non-attainment and maintenance areas in the SCAG region.

In response to the federal agencies' request, the conformity requirements, regional emissions analysis, Timely Implementation of TCMs and the associated conformity findings are addressed in a separate report titled "Transportation Conformity Report" and included in the Draft 2001 RTP Update Appendix. The other required conformity tests – the Fiscal Constraint Demonstration and the Interagency Consultation and Public Involvement Process, are addressed in the Financial Plan and in the Public Involvement and Environmental Justice documents respectively.

The Draft 2001 RTP Update and the associated appendices - the Transportation Conformity Report, the Financial Plan and the Public Involvement and Environmental Justice document, collectively form a set of documentation for the conformity determination of the Draft 2001 RTP Update.

✓ **Environmental Justice**

Since the 1998 RTP was adopted, FHWA and FTA have renewed their commitment to assure environmental justice in the programs they fund. This was done to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and President Clinton's 1994 Executive Order on Environmental Justice. SCAG will accomplish the goal of ensuring that the RTP's benefits and burdens are not inequitably distributed across groups based on race, income, age or disability through a two-part approach adopted by the TCC in October 2000. The program includes public outreach efforts to assure that all members of the public have the opportunity to meaningfully participate in the planning process. These efforts specifically target minority and low-income communities throughout the region and are intended to hear and address their concerns. The analysis component of the Environmental Justice procedures assesses the geographic distribution of environmental impacts and a calculation of the net benefits of the RTP, including accessibility and mobility.

Key Recommendations of the Draft 2001 RTP Update

The key recommendations of the Draft 2001 RTP Update address the principal areas that were noted as concerns in the adoption of the 1998 RTP. Growth in the region is inevitable and this plan identifies investments that will help the region accommodate growth in the most sensible way by funding the operations and maintenance of the existing system to maximize its efficiency and by investing strategically in programs and projects that will help shape the region's growth along existing and improved major transportation corridors. The guiding principles in developing this strategic investment plan may be summarized in three principles: 1) Target investments on best performing projects, 2) Give high priority to maintaining and operating the system and 3) Maximize system utilization.

The long range financing strategy is required to generate new revenues for both existing commitments and the new programs included in this Draft 2001 RTP Update. Aviation issues are still under study but airport growth scenarios have been narrowed down to four possible approaches as discussed above. However, for the purposes of this draft plan, the baseline scenario adopted in the 98 RTP is included as a placeholder for the preferred aviation scenario. The investment program can be summarized as follows, with a recommended project listing for each county provided as a separate list in the Appendix.

- **Existing Regional Transportation System** - Major increases are recommended in funding to maintain and operate the existing regional transportation system. This includes a \$63.7 billion regionwide program for highways, arterial roads and transit, which is a 66 percent increase in funding over the 1998 RTP.
- **High Occupancy Vehicle Lane (HOV) Gap Closures and Connectors**- The recommended investments include HOV connectors, HOV gap closures and the completion of the regional HOV system. In addition, selected high occupancy toll lane (HOT lanes) projects are recommended in Orange and Riverside counties.
- **Strategic Arterial Investments**- Arterials are recognized for their importance to regional mobility and the Draft 2001 RTP Update recommends substantial funding for arterial improvements beyond operations and maintenance, including Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and grade separation projects where these investments would help speed traffic flow and optimize the operation of the arterial system.
- **Goods Movement**- This Draft 2001 RTP Update recommends major investments to improve grade crossings throughout the region, and truck lane projects are recommended in the SR-60 and I-15 corridors. In addition to these projects, the ports and airports will be making investments in their facilities to accommodate the anticipated growth in goods movement over the time frame of the RTP.
- **Transit**- The plan recognizes the importance of transit in the region and, in addition to new funding for operations and maintenance, this plan recommends strategic investments in rapid bus projects, commuter rail services, light rail and transit service expansion. The Draft 2001 RTP Update also recommends the implementation of a high speed magnetic levitation transportation (Maglev) system, provided a financing strategy can be developed.

- **Aviation** - The four selected airport growth scenarios are still under study. When analysis results are available, decisions about the preferred airport growth scenario will need to be incorporated into this plan. In addition, the associated funding program for ground access improvements attendant to the preferred approach will need to be developed and included in this plan.
- **Transportation Demand Management** - This plan continues to place considerable emphasis on Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and actions such as ridesharing, telecommuting and work at home, continued outreach and education related to available options as well as traveler information systems.
- **Non-Motorized Transportation** - This plan proposes significant investment in non-motorized transportation such as bikeways and pedestrian facilities. Specifically, the plan proposes to invest over \$400 million in improving the non-motorized transportation network.

The overall investment program contained in this Draft 2001 RTP Update represents a balanced multi modal group of programs and projects that address the transportation needs projected for the future. In addition, the plan is responsive to the need to protect and improve the environment and to ensure that all of the region's residents and businesses have access to a transportation system that serves their respective needs. Finally, the economic vitality of this region is dependent on a transportation system that works; the recommended investments in this plan will support the strong economic base that the region enjoys today and relies upon for a secure future.

To further augment the proposed plan and program in the Draft 2001 RTP Update, it is proposed that we begin the long term initiatives to develop accessibility of the emerging activity centers by reinforcing the land use and transportation connection and developing more flexible transportation services that make these centers more accessible by other modes, such as scheduled vanpool and jitney services that utilize up-to-date information technology.